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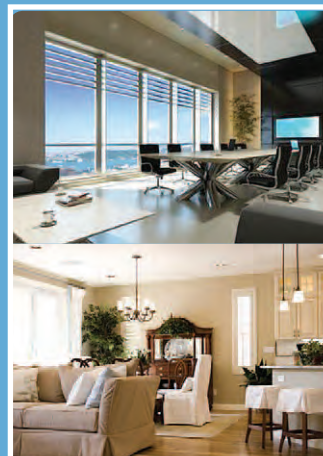
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“Power concedes nothing without demand. It never has and never will. Show me the exact amount of wrong and injustices that are visited upon a person and I will show you the exact amount of words endured by these people.”

– Frederick Douglass, American abolitionist.



Didn't we win in 2008 with Bill C-51?

Government again tries to strangle access to natural health products and erode health freedom

by Shawn Buckley

Health Canada has been restricting access to natural products. This has happened before. Back in the 1990s, Health Canada had been restricting access to natural products by insisting on strict compliance with chemical drug regulations. More onerous regulations were about to be imposed. Canadians rebelled, forcing the government to back down. Our message was clear:

- do not treat natural products as drugs, and
- we want increased access to natural products, something that is inconsistent with drug style regulations.

Back then, the government heard us and backed down. The Health Minister announced:

“As a government we must respect and allow room for Canadians’ freedom of choice when it comes to natural health products. Canadians should have the broadest range of options available to them.” – Allan Rock, Minister of Health October 4, 1997.

Now, in 2019, Health Canada is in stealth attack mode. The regulation of natural products is getting ever stricter. The government has announced it will impose



Currently maximum fine of \$5,000 will be changed to \$5,000,000 for every day there is a violation. Citizens opposed such high fines when fighting Bill C-51 in 2008.

more onerous regulations which will further restrict our access to natural products. They will also restrict our access to truthful information about them. Instead of having freedom of choice and the broadest range of options available, consumers are being driven into a drug model where it is illegal to:

- treat a serious illness with a natural product, and
- share truthful information about natural products.

We are now at a crossroad. If we allow Health Canada to continue unopposed, we will have no freedom of choice. Our only option for serious health conditions will be chemical drugs.

Health Canada has published a timetable to repeal the *Natural Health Product Regulations* and to regulate natural products and chemical non-prescription drugs under a single set of regulations. Natural Health Products and chemical non-prescription drugs will now collectively be called self-care products. The intention of this harmonization is to ensure that natural products are

not used for anything more serious than something like athlete's foot.

For example, we will no longer be able to use traditional evidence to support most efficacy claims. Some traditions like Ayurvedic and Traditional Chinese Medicine have hundreds or even thousands of years of traditional use evidence. Being a little more contemporary, we could no longer use 300 years of British navel records to show that limes treat scurvy. Health Canada's plan is to only allow clinical evidence to prove a product works, as if clinical evidence is more valuable than traditional use evidence or other forms of evidence. We are having specific evidence standards imposed as a specific tool to ensure that our only option is chemical drugs. Books have been written on the frailties and problems with clinical trial evidence. It is outrageous that we are accepting this “tool” to repress our freedom.

Once natural products become self-care products, they cannot be used for conditions which would prompt the average person to seek advice from a provincially licensed health care practitioner. This includes herbalists, naturopaths, traditional Chinese doctors, nutritionists, etc. It will not happen right away, but any practitioner who thinks professional lines of natural products are safe is delusional.

Currently practitioners can compound a product for an individual patient. Health Canada will not confirm whether this exemption will survive. The loss of the ability to compound for individual patients would seriously undermine the ability of many practitioners to treat their patients.

Currently anyone involved with a natural product who breaks the law faces a maximum fine of \$5,000. This will be changed to fines of \$5-million for every day there is a violation. Any director, officer or employee involved in an offence is also personally liable for these \$5-million-a-day fines.

Citizens opposed such high fines when fighting Bill C-51 in 2008. All the powers and penalties in Bill C-51 are going to be imposed on the natural health community when natural health products become self-care products. It is no exaggeration to say that we are now in a worse situation than we were when fighting Bill C-51. In 2008, we could pressure our MPs on how to vote. Now the same changes are being threatened by changing regulations, a process that does not involve any voting in Parliament.

The prices of natural products will increase as manufacturers and distributors face higher costs due to yearly licensing fees and the expense of administrative penalties.

We have the right to choose how we treat our bodies. Before we die most of us will experience periods of great suffering. No MP or Health Canada bureaucrat

can share your pain. It is for you alone to experience. Because your health journey is completely personal, it is an ultimate affront to human dignity and freedom to say that you do not have the absolute right to decide how you will try to avoid illness and how you will treat



“As a government we must respect and allow room for Canadians’ freedom of choice when it comes to natural health products. Canadians should have the broadest range of options available to them.” – Allan Rock, Minister of Health October 4, 1997.

yourself when ill. You are either a farm animal where others decide what happens to your body for profit, or you are a sovereign being. There is no middle ground. The core problem with our drug model is that it is inconsistent with personal control over our bodies.

Under our drug model, anything intended for a therapeutic purpose is illegal. Products *continued p.7...*

ACT NOW

The Natural Health Products Protection Association (the “NHPPA”) is a non-profit organization dedicated to protecting health rights. The NHPPA is calling on everyone to get involved in standing up for our right to decide what remedies will use. Let's stop Health Canada's drug-like self-care regulatory framework. We want to see the *Charter of Health Freedom* enacted as law. The *Charter* is a health bill of rights that would ensure that your right to decide how to prevent illness and how to treat yourself when you are sick is respected. If you take action and join with your personal network to take action, it will make a difference. To learn more about the self-care framework, the *Charter of Health Freedom*, and what you can do to become involved, visit nhppa.org/STOPHC.



Plant-based food preparation

As a dietitian, I have learned a lot about which foods rate highest in folate or vitamin C, and what makes beans, peas and lentils the nutritional superstars they are. Yet my training did not include a course on how to make food taste good.

My mother enjoyed teaching children practical skills such as food preparation. All of my birthdays featured participatory cookie-making activities. The ingredients were not the healthiest—yet our parties were great fun! Meanwhile, my dad, a physiology prof, was doing cancer research and teaching about diabetes at various institutions including Langara College.

It took a while for my two worlds of Nutrition and Health, and Food Preparation, to merge.

A push in that direction was taking courses at the Living Light Culinary Institute (rawfoodchef.com), on the beautiful Mendocino Coast in northern California. People had come from all over the world to gain chef skills using health-supportive ingredients. Class members included people who wanted to transform the cuisine of their native country in order to reduce risk of chronic disease. Some participants had just discovered cardiovascular disease, diabetes, or cancer in them-

selves or a family member, and were well aware of the links between dietary choice and chronic diseases. Others wanted to improve chef skills in order to work at a spa on the Italian coast or a health-oriented restaurant in New York, Texas, or Japan. Some wished to learn quick and simple ways to use a variety of plant foods or to make their everyday time in the kitchen more fun. Others were true gourmets who created exquisite food arrangements, with subtle flavour combinations, both raw and cooked.

We learned knife skills and how to plate artistically. We tasted items that we had never sampled. We learned how to store ingredients, create menus, and integrate healthful eating with travel. We did demonstrations for the class, on a topic of our choice, and gained confidence in this supportive, friendly environment.

One fascinating class explored combining flavours. We had five trays of food, each covered with ingredients. One tray held items that would contribute saltiness – amazingly – including celery. Other trays featured sweet, sour, bitter, and umami. Each small group of students was to create a salad dressing or other menu item using our choices from these basic flavours.

One delight of working with foods is that we can

involve so many of our senses. After attempts at recipes that were not winners in other respects, I appreciated learning from chefs who had a sense of taste and texture that was much better developed than mine.

Lemon Tahini Dressing Makes 1-1/2 cups

Sesame tahini can be used to flavor sauces and soups, or to give creamy texture in a dressing. Since it is not hydrogenated, oil may rise to its surface during storage so it may need stirring before use. Try this dressing on salads, steamed broccoli or cauliflower, and baked potatoes. Using fresh squeezed juice in the recipe is best.

1/2 cup water	1-2 tbsp tamari
1/2 cup tahini	2 cloves garlic
1/4 cup lemon or lime juice	Pinch cayenne pepper (optional)

Put the water, tahini, lemon juice, tamari, garlic, and cayenne in a blender and process for 30 seconds or until smooth. This dressing will keep for up to three weeks when refrigerated in a covered container. ◀

Vesanto Melina is a Vancouver dietitian; vesanto.melina@gmail.com; nutrispeak.com. **EVENT March 9 at 7pm**, Food Demo Party (\$10), register through Meatless Meetup. www.meetup.com/MeatlessMeetup/

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Bill C-51 from pg. 5

can become legal by getting licensed by Health Canada. To understand our drug model, imagine you are in a cage and are ill. You can only treat yourself with the products that Health Canada will allow to be put through the bars of your cage. You are not allowed to leave your cage and to treat yourself with what you choose. To ensure that you do not even want to leave your cage in search of other remedies, truthful health information is kept from you.

This restrictive drug model is defensible in the area of chemical drugs. Chemical drugs carry such a high-risk profile, and cause so many deaths, that deeming them to be illegal and requiring pre-market approval is reasonable. This model breaks down when applied to things we regularly eat. For things in our food supply, there is no meaningful risk of adverse reactions. There is no substance risk to justify losing our rights over our own bodies.



Books have been written on the frailties
and problems with clinical trial evidence.

It is outrageous that we are accepting
this “tool” to repress our freedom.

Health Canada would like us to believe there is a risk that, if we take a natural product, we will delay taking what they call “appropriate” medical treatment (i.e. chemical drugs). Health Canada has even made up a name for this imaginary risk: “failed efficacy”. This is Orwellian comedy. When Health Canada tells us a chemical drug “works” for a serious health condition, it means they have been given two acceptable clinical trials by the pharmaceutical company that show a statistical separation between the chemical and the sugar pill placebo. This separation does not mean that the drug really works, but Health Canada pretends that it does. What most people don’t know is that there could be 10 trials showing the sugar pill works better than the chemical, but the company does not have to share those trials with Health Canada. Indeed, a few years ago I was cross examining an expert hired by Health Canada who explained that in the area of anti-depressants, his company will plan on running eight clinical trials to get the two needed to show a favourable statistical separation between the chemical and the sugar pill. This is the model that Health Canada uses to say a chemical drug works. This is a fraud on the public.

The reality is that the drug model being foisted on natural health is inconsistent with sovereignty over our bodies. We must abandon the idea that things in our food supply are “illegal” as soon as they are intended for a therapeutic purpose. We must abandon the idea that it is okay to censor truthful health information about natural products.

This does not mean that it would be difficult to regulate natural products. Most of us agree that there should be protection against adulteration and fraud. To help protect against fraud, a recommendation from the Standing Committee on Health could be adopted. When the Committee looked into how to regulate natural products, one of their recommendations was to mandate that all of the evidence supporting claims for a natural product must be disclosed. In this way consumers would be able to judge for themselves whether or not the information had any validity. This is the opposite of our current situation of almost complete censorship.

We are at a crossroad. What we collectively decide to do, or not do, will define whether we are factory farm animals or sovereign beings. If we allow this self-care framework to proceed, we will never recover our right to use natural remedies in a meaningful way. We will never get back to that place where truthful health information was not censored. This is a special moment for you to decide who you are.



Shawn Buckley

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Alternative media vs the exterminist economy

Climate action involves challenging the petrobloc and its corporate messaging

by Robert Hackett

Canadians are being bombarded through conventional and social media with propaganda for the Trans Mountain pipeline. The Alberta government alone spent a reported \$23 million to promote this project, one that will help expand the Athabasca bitumen sands and greenhouse gas emissions. Even our public television network, CBC, repeatedly runs Alberta's promos – a simplistic narrative, appropriately in cartoon format. (See a critique of their contestable claims by energy analyst David Hughes at <https://bit.ly/2XDAYd6>).

But we can do better. Stronger support for independent, progressive, “alternative” media would facilitate a more balanced debate about Canada's climate policies and energy future.

A recent study I co-authored for the Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives (CCPA, <https://bit.ly/2NFJyUd>) indicates that promotion of export-oriented oil pipelines doesn't stop with paid ads or Facebook campaigns -- it's embedded in corporate media's regular reporting.

Sampling 300 articles on Canadian pipeline controversies, in corporate and alternative media, the study found that news outlets like the *Vancouver Sun*, *Province*, *Edmonton Journal*, *24 Hours* and *Globe & Mail* emphasized themes and voices in favour of pipeline construction. While these papers could hardly ignore protests and dissident messages, they typically emphasized extractivist themes: job creation, other economic benefits, pipeline safety, legitimacy of the approval process, pipelines as in the public interest, the continued need for fossil fuels, the illegitimacy of opposition.

In opinion articles, pipeline advocates constructed an ideologically selective version of reality, often rendering oil corporations and state agencies invisible as *pol-*

itical actors – they are dissolved into general categories (like “resource development”), depicted as merely reactive to market or political pressures, or simply not mentioned.

By contrast, pipeline opponents were portrayed as an illegitimate special interest group. The anti-pipeline mayors of Vancouver and Montreal were labelled a



There is a democratic case for public funding of independent non-profit journalism. An investment no larger than Notley's \$23 million pipeline cartoons would go a long way to supporting a more pluralist media system.

“stumbling block”, “slinging mud”, practising “canny politics” and speaking “parochially”. Protesters are “well meaning” but “ignorant” and consist of a “vast coalition of environmental groups” that make demands – an inversion of actual power relations, considering the petroleum industry's deep pockets and army of lobbyists. Could any citizens' group match the 826 meetings by just one company – Kinder Morgan, the original proponent of TransMountain expansion – with senior

BC and federal officials between 2011 and 2016? (See www.corporatemapping.ca/826-reasons.)

There's a bigger picture here. Canada's corporate media are components of what Simon Fraser University researcher Bob Neubauer labels the petrobloc. (One example: in 2014, Canada's biggest newspaper chain, PostMedia, reportedly agreed to produce advertorials for the Canadian Association of Petroleum Producers.) Not to be confused with a conspiracy, Neubauer explains, the petrobloc is “an informal alliance between actors – oil companies, banks which finance them, particular political parties, industry-backed think tanks and advocacy groups, etc. – which disproportionately benefit from the industry's highly inequitable structure.” Meanwhile, Canadian workers and taxpayers “gain a relatively tiny share of sector revenue while absorbing vast amounts of ecological and economic risk.”

The petrobloc arguably includes industry-captured government regulatory agencies. Take the National Energy Board – please! Back in 2014, I was one of the relatively few “directly affected” homeowners granted intervenor status in the NEB's review of the TransMountain proposal – a process patently designed to minimize public participation and reach a predetermined approval. Is anybody surprised that the NEB's “reconsideration report” of February 22nd repeated its green light?

In opposition, Trudeau promised to replace and redo the NEB review process. Then he got elected, and didn't. The petrobloc's influence over Canadian economy and policy leads some observers to fear Canada is devolving into “oil's deep state” (in the words of Albertan author Kevin Taft).

And what the petrobloc is defending is extractivism – in Naomi Klein's definition, an *continued p.15 ...*



Universe Within Gwen Randall-Young

PSYCHOLOGY

Hawaiian wisdom

Kahuna is a Hawaiian word meaning “a transmitter of the secret.” It originally referred to members of an order that practiced and taught the many different aspects of ancient inner knowledge pertinent to Hawaiian culture. There are four statements that, today, sum up the Kahuna philosophy. I share them here because they are as timeless and true now as they were when the wisdom was first expressed so long ago.

1. **You create your own reality.** You create this reality through your beliefs, attitudes, desires, expectations, interpretations, judgments, feelings, intentions and persistent thoughts.

2. **You get what you concentrate on.** The thoughts and feelings you dwell on form a blueprint for bringing experiences into your life that are similar to those thoughts and feelings.

3. **You are unlimited.** There are no boundaries to your selfhood.

4. **Your moment of power is now.** The past is only a memory and the future only a possibility. You are not bound by past experiences or perceptions of the future. In this moment, you can change limiting beliefs and begin creating a future of your choosing. Changing your mind will change your experience.

Imagine for a moment a technology that could immediately show what you were thinking or imagining in your mind on a screen. Now what if what we think or imagine becomes what we see in our life. This is what is meant when it is said that you create your own reality.


If you see experiences, good or bad, as opportunities for learning, you will gain wisdom.

If you think you have been a victim in your life, you will continue to see situations in which you feel victimized. If you expect to fail, you will manifest that. If you believe you will never achieve what you want, that is what you will create for yourself. If you believe a person will never change, you may not see subtle changes that are indeed occurring.

On the other hand, if you tell yourself that you are strong and can handle whatever comes your way, then you will. If you see people as basically good, you will have a positive and accepting attitude which will bring out the best in those you encounter. If you see experiences, good or bad, as opportunities for learning, you will gain wisdom.

There are no limits to our ability to grow other than those we put on ourselves. With the internet, unlimited resources are at our fingertips. People who know that some of their behaviors are dysfunctional or even harmful to themselves or others, and who say, “that’s just the way I am,” or “I have always been that way,” are sabotaging their ability to change.

Your moment of power is now. We cannot change the past or control the future. If there is something in your life or yourself that you do not like, know that you do have the power to change it. If your limiting beliefs just won’t budge, then get someone to help you see past the blocks you are putting in your way.

Understand these things: The world is what you think it is, but you have the power to change your perceptions. Energy flows where we are focusing our attention. Focus on the positive. And remember, the power you need is within you. Now. 

Gwen Randall-Young is an author and psychotherapist in private practice. To read more articles, or to order books, “Deep Powerful Change” Hypnosis MP3s, or MP3s for Creating Effective Relationships visit www.gwen.ca or check out her Facebook inspirational page.

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Mac McLaughlin

ZODIAC

StarWise

March 2019

In the light of recent events in Canadian politics we would conclude that last issue's StarWise column was a real stinker. I had said that Trudeau's chart was looking real good, and that it was indicating that he would be re-elected come the fall season. I will put my trust in the stars this time. Several months before Trump was elected I had predicted his win, and months later I got weak and folded to the intense media storm indicating that he had no chance to win. So I wrote a column just before the election saying that he couldn't win. I bucked the stars, lost my faith, and the stars proved otherwise. Well, I won't be tricked again. Possibly I will suffer the humiliation of being wrong if Trudeau gets the boot and we end up with a new Prime Minister at the end of the year. The stars say Trudeau, so I will stick to my guns, oops, I mean stars. One way or the other, regardless of who's at the helm, here and down south things are going to get real hot, internationally, globally and every which way. We all fall down.

Saturn and Pluto join up in Capricorn, the sign of all government agencies. My prediction is that 2020, 2021, and 2022 will be the years of the greatest amount of tension and change in recent history. Presently we are witnessing the initial stages of a cleansing process of purification, by firstly lancing the cyst of poisonous and putrid good old boys club politics here, there and everywhere. Painful? You bet it is. But wholly and totally necessary in order for the healing process to begin. There's nowhere to hide, nowhere to run. Those left standing, will only be standing because of their pristine behaviour unclouded and unblemished by greed and collusion, misdirection and all the rest of the wink wink BS that we have tolerated seemingly forever. Death and rebirth is on the menu, with hardly any other choices. Would you like fries with that? How about a slightly used wood splitter?

A new world consciousness will birth out of all of this chaotic churning. We are one people on one planet, totally connected together, one to the other. Peace will be the new order, and as my great Guru Param Sant Kirpal Singh Ji had said, that one day the truly enlightened ones will be in control. Presently everywhere we look, close and far, it seems that our leaders have lost their minds, and have been swallowed by greed, pride and avarice. A new day is dawning, and our part is to become humane beings, and truly start loving one another.

Mac McLaughlin has been a practising, professional astrologer for more than four decades. His popular **Straight Stars** column ran in Vancouver's largest weekly newspaper for 11 years. Email mac@macsstars.com or call 604-731-1109.



ARIES Mar 21 - Apr 19

The Sun enters Aries on March 20 and within 4 hours of that event a full moon takes place. Epiphanies manifest, revelations and realizations unfold. Career prospects are strong, money flows in, possibly from innovative and unusual ideas. Travel is indicated.



TAURUS Apr 20 - May 21

Shifts and changes are taking place, and it would be wise to go along with the universal plan. Stubborn resistance may work at times, but not this time. Innovative ideas along with a pioneering spirit will move you along nicely.



GEMINI May 22 - Jun 20

Take your time. Then take more time to figure out just what to do. Lord Mercury hooks up with Neptune indicating a possible fuzzy, wonky time developing in the last half of the month. Creative levels are high, and those that are musically or artistically inclined will benefit most. Strive for honesty, and clarity is best.



CANCER Jun 21 - Jul 22

It's complicated. So many thought waves coming through, and you just don't know what to do. Simplify is best, and let go of the rest. All kinds of dynamic changes are taking place, so it's best to go with the flow. Creative energy is high, and you might surprise yourself with what you come up with.



LEO Jul 23 - Aug 22

You have to dig in deep now. Investments and inheritance considerations are on board. Health and work issues need to be managed. Travel plans manifest, and you may be tired of the status quo, and looking for new ventures. Dreams and strange psychic phenomenon may also manifest now. Pay attention to them.



VIRGO Aug 23 - Sep 22

Two distinct planetary energies will help guide you through a fairly complex period. On one level, your plan is in place, and hopefully the universe cooperates. Murphy's law can come into play, so have plan B at the ready. Don't cut corners, and keep things clear and simple, otherwise you may be pulling your hair out trying to figure what the hay just happened.



LIBRA Sep 23 - Oct 22

On March 20, the full moon in your sign casts light and understanding onto whatever is on your platter. You may be plumbing the depths as all kinds of past scenarios get revisited, especially regarding loved ones. Home, land and real estate come into play. Time with family and friends is indicated.



SCORPIO Oct 23 - Nov 21

Like Taurus, you're not amenable to unplanned changes. Scorps are known to dig in and hold the fort. But you might be in the mood to make changes and certainly the stars are always willing to help. Relationships sometimes sink ships and now is the time to consider what is best to do.



SAGITTARIUS Nov 22 - Dec 21

Jupiter lends a hand by bringing opportunities to make positive changes. In the meantime Mercury and Neptune conspire to keep thing hazy and fuzzy for a while. Mainly, look before you leap, and reconsider your moves and motives for any important decisions at this time in your life. Then think some more about it.



CAPRICORN Dec 22 - Jan 19

It is a very dynamic time for the sea goat, which is part fish, part goat – and both very important symbols for Capricorn. The goat strives to succeed at putting its material life in order. The fish is related to the mystical and spiritual aspects of life; it is exceptionally important to balance the two. Beginnings and endings are taking place now.




AQUARIUS Jan 20 - Feb 19

Venus is now moving through Aquarius and prompting a long look at what makes you happy and fulfilled. It's time for some soul searching and weighing what is important and what needs to be moved out of your life. Lord Uranus is pressuring you to make positive and innovative changes.



PISCES Feb 20 - Mar 20

Mercury and Neptune's meet-up later in the month can throw a stick into the works, or it can bring a highly receptive and intuitive energy that can stimulate unusual and highly creative ideas. Clarity, honesty, and purity are the tools that are needed to benefit from this dynamic planetary configuration. 

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Mānuka bushes flower annually for a few short weeks.

Flora Mānuka: a honey of a partnership with New Zealand's Māori

by Bruce Mason

For centuries, New Zealand's Māori have utilized medicinal honey from the native mānuka bush. The rest of the world – including the medical establishment – is beginning to catch on to the myriad benefits of this healing plant, labelled by some as a “super-food.”

A leader in this trend is Burnaby, BC-based Flora Manufacturing and Distributing Ltd. It is making a graded and certified mānuka health product available internationally and, in the process, is helping to heal the social, cultural and spiritual wounds suffered by the Māori.

Flora is one of North America's premier nutraceutical manufacturers. Privately owned and internationally regarded for high-quality supplements, the company has entered into a partnership with Māori beekeepers. The venture is sustainable, eco-friendly, and a model for restoring and revitalizing traditional Māori culture. It is grounded in shared values of quality, honesty, integrity and family.

Understanding and appreciating the significance of the initiative requires some knowledge of the historic relationship between the mānuka plant and the Māori people, both of which inhabit one of the few places not facing bee colony collapse disorder.

Mānuka (with a Māori macron over the “a”) or *Lepidospermum scoparium*, flowers annually for a few short weeks. Its habitat was severely impacted in the late-1800's by a volcanic explosion. Its use was all but lost to New Zealand Māori who returned from World War II to find their land given to British soldiers. In the 1970-



The health promoting properties of honey have long been recognized by diverse ancient societies – its cultural, religious and medicinal importance recorded in rock paintings, carvings and sacred text.

90s, wild mānuka fell victim to land-clearing efforts and was fed to domestic animals. While this ancient remedy is now one of the modern wellness world's most prized ingredients, the plants survival has been threatened time and time again by both natural disasters and human interaction.


Lately, though, Māori are regaining their economic footing and buying more land, including a sacred burial ground on Mount Tarawera, located in a region of unique geothermal activity on New Zealand's North Island. In the process, they are helping to transform farming practices in remote, marginal, erosion-prone hill country – in the face of rapidly advancing, catastrophic climate change.

The proven benefits of mānuka are unique, and so are features of the joint venture between Flora and the

Te Arawa Māori tribe. Money, being paid to every tribe member, will be a significant addition to the Onuku Māori Lands Trust and various scholarship programs. Women play a major role in the Māori bee operation, including prolonging the life of queen bees and working against the alarming world-wide endangerment of bee populations. All business decisions must be approved in town halls called Marae and, along with smaller boardroom meetings, the process must be transparent for all to see. The partnership will also help stem the market influx of lower quality uncertified mānuka knock-offs.

The health promoting properties of honey have long been recognized by diverse ancient societies – its cultural, religious and medicinal importance recorded in rock paintings, carvings and sacred text. The antibiotic effects of honey are due to the presence of hydrogen peroxide produced by the enzyme glucose oxidase in the honeybee. Honey derived from the mānuka flower has an unusually high concentration of methylglyoxal.

The use of plant-based remedies in general have been eclipsed by modern antibiotics, but the emergence of pathogens resistant to some or all antibiotics has resulted in renewed scientific investigation in those remedies. Crucially, there are no reported cases of bacteria developing resistance to honey, nor can mānuka's proven properties be reproduced in laboratories.

In a world awash in bad news, the superior Flora mānuka product and Māori partnership in New Zealand are most welcome, especially when factoring in the myriad of cultural and economic benefits of mānuka bush restoration. 

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Mānuka honey, made exclusively from mānuka flowers, is a unique tasting honey with a long history of traditional use. Fierce global demand for mānuka has driven up prices and attracted counterfeit and adulterated products. It's estimated that two-thirds of global mānuka products are not the real thing.



New Zealand's **Unique Mānuka Factor Honey Association™** and **Ministry for Primary Industries (MPI)** are two key bulwarks against counterfeit honey.

Real mānuka has a specific "chemical fingerprint" that counterfeit honey cannot match.



Reputable mānuka honey brands are licensed by the Unique Mānuka Factor Honey Association™, an internationally recognized third party that ensures identity, key ingredient levels and quality. UMF™ graded products have been tested for three signature compounds: **Leptosperin, DHA (Dihydroxyacetone) and Methylglyoxal (MGO)**. The higher the UMF™ number on the product, the

higher the concentration of these compounds. None of these compounds on their own, nor rating systems based on pollen count, are enough to guarantee authenticity. MGO is one of the main ingredients unique to mānuka honey, so some brands are also measured and graded according to the honey's MGO content.

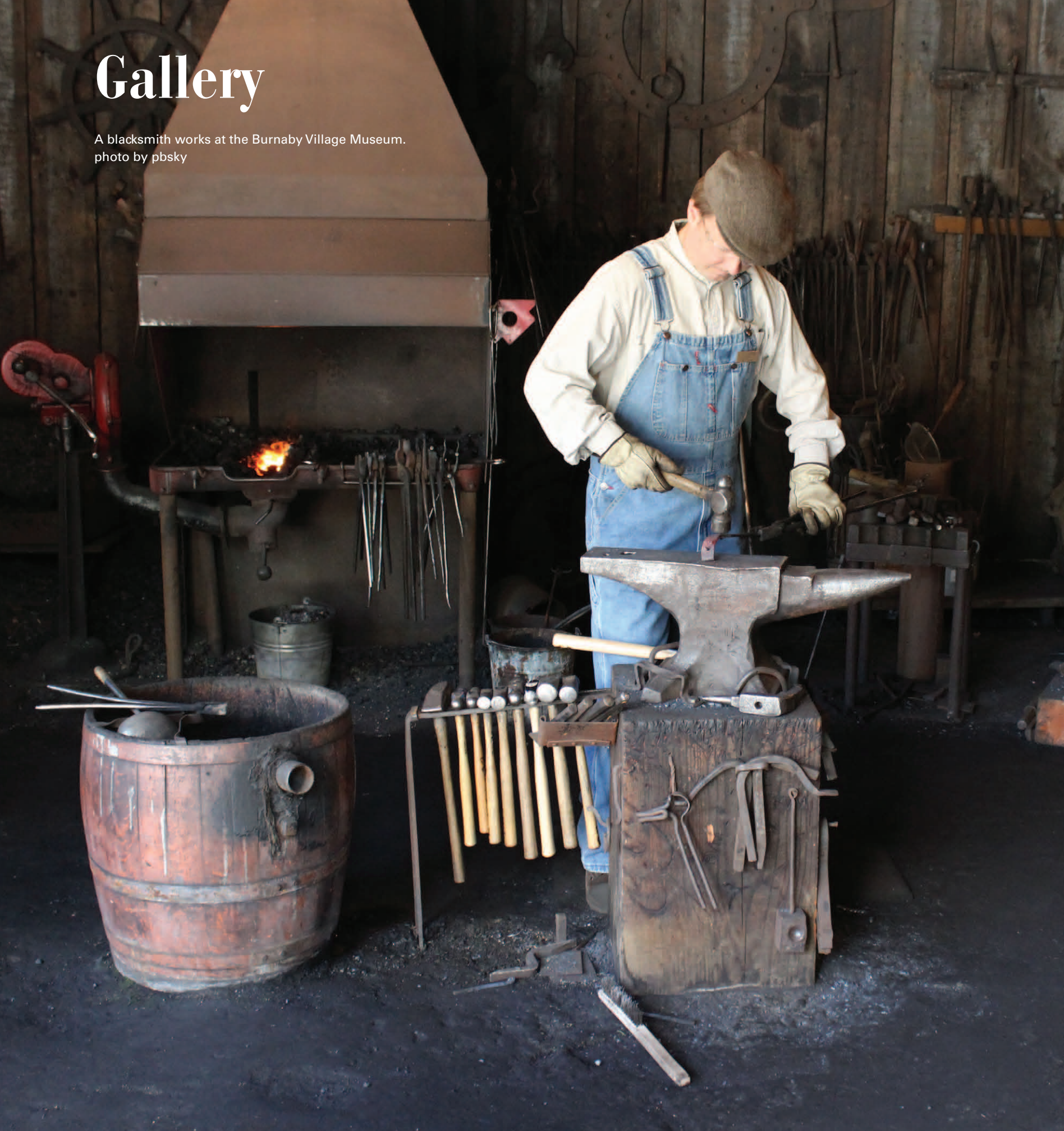
New Zealand mānuka honey is also authenticated through lab testing under New Zealand's Ministry for Primary Industries (MPI). Mānuka honey must pass five tests to be considered authentic and 100% pure.



Some companies offer a traceability system as an additional layer of transparency. Using a smart phone, consumers can scan the label to learn more about their jar of honey (batch specific info, region info, lab test results, UMF™ certification, etc.). This, along with the UMF™ license, helps ensure confidence the consumer is getting authentic mānuka honey and not adulterated or counterfeit honey.

Gallery

A blacksmith works at the Burnaby Village Museum.
photo by pbsky



...*Exterminist economy* from pg. 8

economic model based on the appropriation and removal, without renewal, of natural resources from the earth, usually for export to dominant players in world markets.

“Extractivism” describes Canada’s historic role as a hewer of wood and drawer of water. But Canada’s apparent addiction to fossil fuel exports adds a new dimension. If business-as-usual for the fossil fuel industry has entailed the conscious acceleration of global warming; the suppression of research and the deliberate sowing of public doubt about its links to fossil fuels; the dismissal of climate scientists’ warnings to keep 80 percent of fossil fuel reserves in the ground; the use of political and economic power to postpone a post-carbon economy; the overriding of Indigenous rights and cultures; and disproportionate complicity in the planet’s Sixth Mass Extinction of species, including potentially our own – is “extractivism” still a sufficiently strong term?

After all, defining the terms of a policy debate is halfway to winning it. A growing UK-based pro-climate movement cleverly calls itself “Extinction Rebellion”. Extinction indicates what is at stake, but it implies a Darwinian process of *natural* selection. When extinction results from conscious choices to which there are alternatives, it’s fair to describe fossil fuel extractivism as an economy of *extermination*.

As if to confirm the point, the NEB’s February report admits that greenhouse gas emissions, and adverse environmental impacts on the resident killer whale population, would both be “significant,” yet finds the project nevertheless “justified”.

Fortunately, the CCPA study finds that non-corporate independent daily outlets (like *The Tyee*, *National Observer*, and *rabble.ca*), provide important elements of a counter-narrative to extractivist Exterminism, giving more attention than do corporate media to pipeline-critical themes: the power of Big Oil threatens democracy; the approval process was flawed; the pipeline itself threatens to accelerate climate change; it brings other environmental risks (tanker spills, pipeline ruptures, tank farm fires); it actually threatens or exports potential Canadian jobs; it tramples First Nations’ rights.

Alternative media were also more likely to give access to First Nations spokespeople, environmental groups,

experts and protesters.

Sure, there’s room for improvement. In pipeline coverage, alternative media did little to challenge the paralyzing stereotype that jobs and environmental protection are mutually exclusive. Nor did they give much voice to fossil fuel workers and unions. Their inclusion is important not only to offset the pro-business tendencies of a commercial press, but also, because the labour movement has generated a potent concept for building a low-carbon economy – a Just Transition from fossil fuels. That includes workers’ participation in decision-making, job retraining (in renewable energy and other relevant, growing sectors), and other measures to minimize economic insecurity in resource communities. If media muffle labour’s voices, that allows fossil capital to shape public debate by constructing a skewed picture of workers’ interests.

Including labour’s voices and exploring Just Transition options? That’s a big journalistic mission more suited to alternative than corporate media culture.

Yet the playing field is far from level. Even though corporate media face declining revenues and newsroom cutbacks,

alternative media don’t have comparable investment capital, newsgathering resources, audience reach, corporate alliances, or access to distribution networks (particularly the giant tech platforms like Facebook, that function as publishing gatekeepers to so much content).


There is a democratic case for public funding of independent non-profit journalism. An investment no larger than Notley’s \$23 million pipeline cartoons would go a long way to supporting a more pluralist media system. Just two percent of that amount would nearly double the revenues that *The Tyee*, the award-winning Vancouver-based online newsmagazine, reported for 2010.

Interestingly, last November, federal Finance Minister Bill Morneau announced \$595 million in tax incentives over five years to support Canadian journalism, including charitable status for non-profit news organizations, and tax credits for news outlets that hire to expand local news coverage.

This new policy initiative implies a welcome recognition that journalism is a public good, that is, a needed civic service that can’t be easily produced through market mechanisms,

one that serves democracy best through independence from both state and corporate power. We need a stable financial basis for professional journalism in the for-profit sector, as well as the largely volunteer- and freelance-based alternative media.

But don’t forget, Morneau paid Kinder Morgan \$4.5 billion of Canadians’ taxes for its leaky 66 year old pipeline. Can we trust his media initiative to help redress the imbalance between corporate and independent media? How much support will go to journalism rather than to media companies’ CEOs and hedge fund creditors?

Keep careful watch, because genuinely democratic media reform is integral to struggles for a sustainable economy, climate action, and democratic counterweights to the excessive power of the petrobloc and its Exterminist economic model. 

Robert Hackett is a retired professor of Communication at Simon Fraser University, a research associate with the CCPA, and co-author of **Journalism and Climate Crisis: Public Engagement, Media Alternatives** (Routledge, 2017).



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Broadway subway line not a done deal

nor is it a good one

by Elizabeth Murphy



What \$7 billion buys in modern surface tram at \$50 million per km rather than only the Broadway subway from VCC to UBC. For illustrative purposes only. Illustration by Kathryn Mandell. (UBC Prof. Patrick Condon)

Vancouver City Council's recent endorsement of SkyTrain technology for a Broadway (the BS-Line) extension from Arbutus to UBC, through the heart of Kitsilano and West Point Grey, is energizing neighbourhoods all along the line.

A March 5 meeting of 300 people at St. James Community Square, sponsored by local residents associations, was the first real community consultation to take place in a process that has been marred by rushed deadlines. As part of a panel including UBC Prof. Patrick Condon, we outlined the many concerns with the city and regional current directions.

Although TransLink's Mayors' Council has approved preliminary planning for the extension of the Broadway subway to UBC, this is far from a done deal. The unfolding corruption scandal at SNC-Lavalin and the company's proprietary role in SkyTrain technology puts this Mil-

lennium Line extension in question. Also, the underlying assumptions used to justify the subway do not add up accurately regarding projections of growth, ridership or technology performance of various options.

The recommendations for a SkyTrain subway to UBC are based on a report that updates the 2012 SNC-Lavalin/Steer Davies Gleave report. Since SNC-Lavalin is the main SkyTrain supplier throughout the region, it is not surprising SkyTrain was their recommendation, and since the current update is based on the 2012 report, it would again come to the same conclusion.

The Expo and Millennium Lines are a proprietary unconventional railway, of which the technical patents are owned by Bombardier and the engineering patents owned by SNC-Lavalin.

"Only seven lines have been built in almost 40 years, with only three seriously used for urban transport. Why is

Metro Vancouver now the only region in the world that continues to build with SkyTrain?" asks Malcolm Johnson of the group Rail for the Valley.

Given SNC-Lavalin's proprietary rights for SkyTrain technology and its ongoing criminal prosecution for fraud and corruption that could result in a ban from bidding on government projects in Canada, the mayors requested confirmation that other companies beside SNC-Lavalin could competitively provide SkyTrain technology.

SNC-Lavalin is already banned from bidding on World Bank projects due to corruption, and Bombardier is also being investigated.

There also are the questionable underlying assumptions of growth and ridership projections used to justify a SkyTrain subway.

Simple solutions that could be implemented immediately have been avoided to reinforce their biased narrative that a

subway on Broadway is the only option to serve ridership to UBC and that the system is already at capacity. Commuters have been held hostage for over a decade to justify this scheme.

Alternate routes, such as along Fourth Avenue, have been under-served while increased commuters from the opening of the Evergreen Line have been dumped on Broadway rather than diverted to other less-congested routes with express or expanded B-Line buses.

Also, the mode comparative costs have been biased to SkyTrain. UBC Professor Patrick Condon has shown how LRT tram systems throughout Europe and North America are built for under \$50 million per kilometre, while the evaluation report vastly inflates the tram costs to \$282 million per kilometre.

The \$4-billion SkyTrain subway 7.1-kilometre extension from Arbutus to UBC would be about \$563 million per kilometre. Both LRT and subway estimates include a 30- to 50-per-cent contingency, even though the subway has higher risk of unknowns with underground streams and utilities to divert.

The entire 13-kilometre SkyTrain subway from VCC to UBC would be at least \$7 billion. If LRT was used, the whole route could be continuously built without a transfer point for much less than the \$2.8 billion already committed for the phase to Arbutus. However, that option is not part of the updated report. Why not?

If they proceed with a subway option, it will be enormously disruptive and damaging to local businesses all along the route for years. Many business owners are already panicking, knowing that even with a bored tunnel, there will be cut and cover at every station and for utilities. And it is still a possibility of a bait and switch like SNC-Lavalin did for Canada Line when approvals were for boring while the eventual contract was for cut and cover. There is a lot of money at stake.

Of course, the biggest money is in the real estate development *cont'd pg 23 ...*

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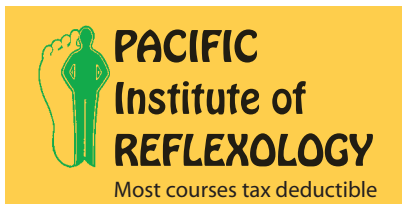
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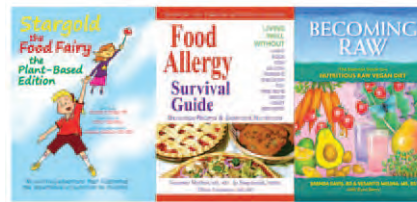
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Growing a relationship

by Gwen Randall-Young

The greatest degree of inner tranquillity comes from the development of love and compassion. The more we care for the happiness of others, the greater is our own sense of well-being.

— Tenzin Gyatso, 14th Dalai Lama

If we look back over past generations, we see many areas where progress has been made. Whether we think in terms of technological change, advances in medicine, environmental awareness or human rights, we can see how things are much better than they once were. We are infinitely better off than our grandparents and great grandparents.

Ironically and surprisingly, there is one area in which little seems to have changed. That is the area of intimate relationships. Certainly, there is more equality; women work outside the home and men change diapers, but I am not talking about these things. I am referring to the patterns that occur between couples.

Communication is still often an area of difficulty. Couples still get into cycles of conflict, anger and withdrawal and still have great difficulty understanding the other's point of view. Often, they are not even interested in how the other sees things, so determined are they that their view is the correct one. They get stuck in adversarial positions and are unable to move past them.

Most marriage vows include something about loving, honouring and caring for the other. When a relationship is new, the individuals are excited to have this

person in their life and tend to treat them well. Over time, when the newness is gone, sometimes things shift so the relationship becomes more of a competition or a contest and less of a cooperative venture.

So what happens to move things from wedded bliss to the divorce courts or to lives of quiet (or not so quiet) desperation? Ego happens.

True love is unconditional. Think of the love we have

**We must value the happiness of others
as much as our own and sometimes
even put their happiness first.**

for a baby or a favourite pet. They may inconvenience us at times or make messes for us to clean up, but we take all of that in stride because we accept it will not always be perfect. We forget those things quickly and easily return to a place where we can give love freely.

Although we may start out that way in relationships, ego takes us off course. We may have baggage in the form of old hurts or defensiveness that we bring to a relationship. Ego may have ideas about what it should receive and how it should be treated, without too much thought about what it should give to the other and how the other should be treated. Ego has tunnel vision that way.

When we are in conflict, ego has taken over. Even if

things happen in the relationship that cause distress for one or the other, in an evolved relationship the sense of love and caring for the other allows for real listening and working it out.

Conflict tends to come when the other is not taken into consideration and is neither heard nor valued. When ego is busy defending itself or going on the attack, it is completely unavailable to the other. Often the one in distress ends up feeling even worse after bringing up the issue for there is an added sense of rejection and abandonment in the face of an unsympathetic, uncompassionate ego.

It is not surprising that this same pattern has existed for generations. Effective communication and relationship building seem to be a blind spot in our culture.

In school, children learn to write essays and solve math problems, but not how to solve interpersonal problems and verbally communicate in a productive way when there are differences.

At home, if parents are still reliving the old patterns of their parents, the children will not learn new ways there either.

We have a long way to go. If we could simply grasp that we do not kick the dog or hit the baby and similarly we should not be harsh with loved ones, it might be a start. We must value the happiness of others as much as our own and sometimes even put their happiness first. And not simply to please them, but rather to show genuine compassion. ■

Ecocide naming an unspeakable crime

by Bruce Mason

Calling out the perpetrators of climate change is certainly top-of-mind these days, but when speaking truth to power, it's best to choose your words most carefully. Be precise, passionate, but not necessarily polite. Or suffer the consequences.

We find ourselves at a climate precipice, perhaps little more than a decade away from a full-blown Anthropocene, which threatens mass extinctions including our own species. It is equally as obvious – or should be – that this clear and present danger is largely the work of 100 or so multinational corporations who collectively contribute about 70 percent of the pollution now profoundly (and possibly irreversibly) impacting the earth's atmosphere.

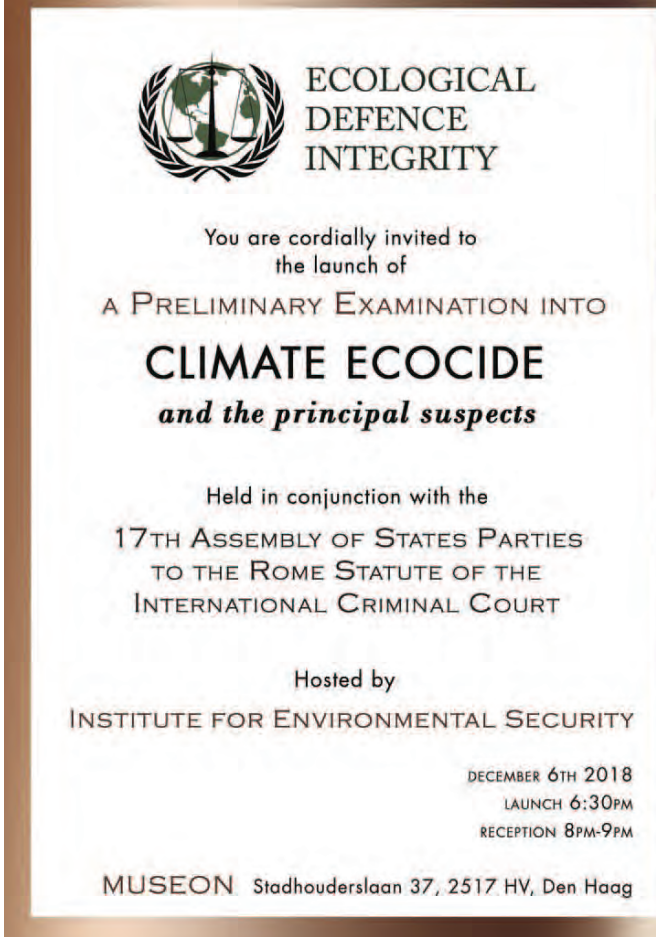


In April 2010, Scottish lawyer Polly Higgins proposed to the UN Law Commission an amendment to the Rome Statute to include a law against Ecocide.

For decades, the vast majority of us have happily played along, protected by a smokescreen of ignorance, fear and denial. Recently, though, the word “ecocide” is being substituted for the numerous and diabolical ways humans produce greenhouse gases. And it works. It refocuses conversations and resonates with the urgent need to mobilize the resources necessary for restitution. And it serves notice to the elite one percent that they must cease their unprecedented criminal activity so the rest of us can get out of harm's way. For justice to be seen as well as done.

More and more, “ecocide” is finding it's way into the global vocabulary. It speaks to the younger generation who are becoming increasingly freaked out and active. It could emerge as Word of the Year for 2019, due in part to recent comments – all of which have gone viral – by American journalist David Wallace-Wells, Dutch historian Rutger Bregman, and Scottish lawyer Polly Higgins.

“It is, I promise, worse than you think,” was how Wallace-Wells began a horrifying 2017 article in New York Magazine, the most-read in the history of the publication. In a more recent, equally terrifying book, *The Uninhabitable Earth: Life After Warming*, Wallace-Wells went on to illustrate a hitherto unseen near-future filled with famine, flood, fire, political chaos, economic collapse, and a sun that cooks us.



Among the eye-popping statistics he presents is the revelation that we've done more environmental damage since 1992 (the year UN established its Framework Convention on Climate Change) than we did in the millennia that preceded it. Furthermore, if we do not immediately and radically change course, 150 million people will die – the equivalent of 25 Holocausts, or twice the number of deaths in World War II – by the end of the century, from air pollution alone.

“Taxes, taxes, taxes. All the rest is bull-shit in my opinion,” Rutger Bregman told participants who had flown in 1,500 private jets to last month's World Economic Forum in Davos, Switzerland. “I hear people talking the language of participation, justice, equality and transparency but almost no one raises the real issue of tax avoidance, right? And of the rich just not paying their fair share,” he continued. “It feels like I'm at a firefighters conference and no one's allowed to speak about water.” (Note: a must-see Bregman interview is posted on Common Ground's website.)

Polly Higgins, a lawyer with one client, Mother Earth, says that ecocide crime is an idea whose time has come. “It is the missing international law to re-balance

the greatest injustice of our time.” Existing corporate duties prioritize profit, she argues. This has long-term, adverse consequences that are legal, despite causing extensive damage, destruction and loss of ecosystems. As a result, dangerous industrial activity continues unabated and the impacts remain unaddressed. Higgins predicts that criminalizing ecocide would impose a legal duty on governments to care and protect the public from dangerous industrial practices.

Higgins is the founding co-director of Ecological Defence Integrity and author of three books including *Eradicating Ecocide* which earned the People's Book Prize in 2011. A documentary about her work, *Advocate for the Earth*, can be viewed online.

In April 2010 she proposed to the UN Law Commission an amendment to the Rome Statute to include a law against Ecocide. In 2018, she identified two Royal Dutch Shell CEOs and the Dutch Ministry of Economic Affairs and Climate Policy as principal suspects in an independent preliminary examination into the potential crime of Climate Ecocide. Her purpose was to determine whether there is sufficient evidence both to establish a crime of ecocide and to justify its adoption as an atrocity alongside genocide, crimes against humanity, war crimes and crimes of aggression.

“The fact that ecocide occurs during peacetime does not make it any less of an atrocity, or any less of a crime,” says Higgins. “We live in an age where the consequences of dangerous industrial activity are long-term, trans-boundary and can be felt on the other side of the world. Hurricanes will not wait whilst we endlessly vacillate over agreements which cannot be enforced,” she adds. “I have a choice: to protect our Earth or to let it be destroyed. For me it is unconscionable to walk away.”

Hear, hear.

Word of the year?

Ecocide: The extensive destruction, damage to or loss of ecosystem(s) of a given territory, whether by human agency or by other causes, to such an extent that peaceful enjoyment by the inhabitants of that territory has been severely diminished.

– Polly Higgins.



Like them or not, we need insects

An alarming scientific review has found human activity is driving insects to extinction. When the bottom of the food chain is endangered, so too is everything up the chain - including people. Insect declines threaten birds, fish, reptiles and amphibians that eat insects, as well as the many plants that require them for pollination. Insects are also crucial to soil health, nutrient recycling and ecosystem functioning.

"If insect species losses cannot be halted, this will have catastrophic consequences for both the planet's ecosystems and for the survival of mankind," review co-author Francisco Sánchez-Bayo, from the University of Sydney, Australia, told the Guardian.

Habitat loss from intensive agriculture and urbanization is the main cause of the decline, according to the review, "Worldwide decline of the entomofauna: A review of its drivers," published in Biological Conservation. Agricultural pesticide and fertilizer use, pathogens, invasive species and climate change are also major factors.

Review authors Sánchez-Bayo and Kris Wyckhuys, from the China Academy of Agricultural Sciences in Beijing, analyzed 73 scientific reports from around the world. Although the authors admit to some limitations with study, the reports indicate that 40 per cent of insect species are declining, one-third are endangered and the total mass of insects is dropping by 2.5 per cent a year. If these trends continue, most insects could be gone within a century - with severe consequences for all life.

The planet is already headed into its sixth mass extinction. Humans - who make up just 0.01 per cent of Earth's living biomass - are the major drivers of the current catastrophe. A World Wildlife Fund study concluded that we've wiped out 60 per cent of mammals,

fish, birds and reptiles since 1970. Another study found people have destroyed 83 per cent of wild mammals and half of all plants since the dawn of civilization. As frightening as that is, the rate of insect extinction is eight times that of mammals, birds and reptiles.

Sánchez-Bayo said insect declines started at the beginning of the 20th century and accelerated in the 1950s and '60s, reaching "alarming proportions"

**If we're capable of so much innovation
and technological prowess, surely
we have what it takes to resolve the
growing environmental crises**

over the past two decades. He believes recent rapid declines are a result of increased use of new classes of insecticides like neonicotinoids and fipronil, which remain in lands and water, sterilizing soils and killing beneficial insects. (Canada has delayed phasing out neonicotinoids.)

Butterflies and moths are hardest hit, with bees and beetles also dramatically affected. The researchers found that a few adaptable species are increasing, but nowhere near enough to offset losses or replace services like pollination, animal nourishment and soil-health maintenance.

People have made great advances over our short history, but we've often failed to apply our unique foresight to understand the consequences of our actions. Industrial agriculture increased our ability to produce more food, internal combustion engines and oil facilitated mobility and trade, and computer technologies

brought about efficiencies in many areas, as well as enhanced social connection.

But our lack of care in implementing these many "advances" has led to overpopulation, pollution, habitat loss, extinction, climate change and more. If we're capable of so much innovation and technological prowess, surely we have what it takes to resolve the growing environmental crises we've caused.

Some solutions can be implemented quickly and relatively easily, such as banning the worst pesticides, implementing the many available and emerging solutions to pollution and global warming, and examining better ways to grow, produce and distribute food.

Sánchez-Bayo argues that changes in agricultural methods are crucial, noting organic farms and farms that used limited pesticide amounts in the past had more insects. Research also shows organic farms maintain healthier soils, use less energy, emit fewer greenhouse gas emissions and produce higher yields than conventional farms, especially during droughts.

Improving soil health is also a way to sequester more carbon and help reduce the threat of global warming.

Many people are repelled by insects or are frightened at the thought of bites and stings. No matter what you think of them, there's no denying they're essential to all life. If insects die out, we won't survive. From banning destructive pesticides to reforming agricultural methods to planting insect- and pollinator-friendly gardens in urban areas, there's much we can and must do to help the critters survive and thrive. ◀

David Suzuki is a scientist, broadcaster, author and co-founder of the David Suzuki Foundation. Written with contributions from David Suzuki Foundation Senior Editor Ian Hanington. Learn more at davidsuzuki.org.

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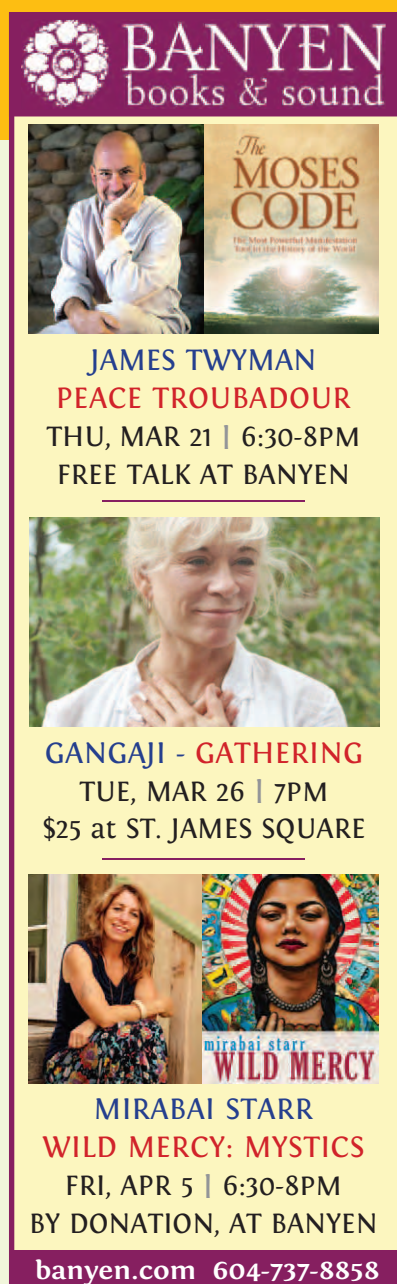


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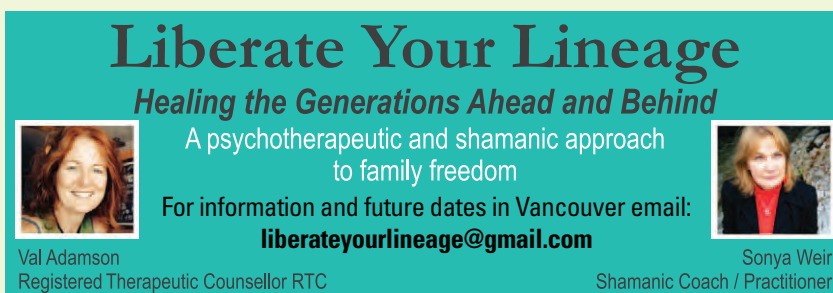


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APR 5
Mirabai Starr, Wild Mercy: Mystics. By donation. 6:30-8 p.m. Banyen Books. 3608 W. 4th Ave., Vancouver. **www.banyen.com, 604-737-8858.**

APR 5-7
Introduction to Foot Reflexology commences Certificate Weekend Training Course. Friday Introduction 7.30 p.m. \$10; Course \$395 + GST. Pacific Institute of Reflexology (604) 875-8818, **www.pacificreflexology.com**

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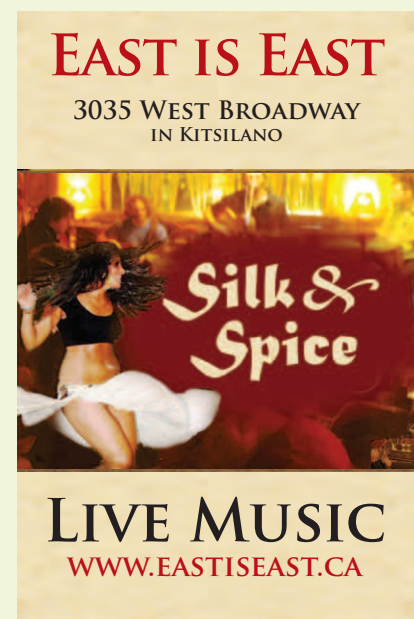
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You must understand that we do it with good purpose. The rich must get richer. So it is written. Our economic rules state that if you make lots of money, you must make more or get punished. Those poor rich folk must deal with this. Then we have the other rich people who depend on said richer person to amass more riches or they can dish out their punishment. Without this system, our world would crumble... by crumbling the world. Weird, eh?

But we do good from what we dig out. We create things. Lots of things. Things we don't even need, until the advertisement convinces us otherwise. Done right, everyone must have the thing-of-the-hour, and nobody wants to be left out. It's all part of our quest to be individuals; buying what everyone else got before us.

And I suppose we do put things back. Once the thing-of-the-hour becomes obsolete, it is deposited in designated areas

far away from where we live, returning these products ceremoniously into the earth. It involves bulldozers. In a way, we are holding to our kindergarten promise, just differently. It's like taking a kid's toy, dismantling it for our own purposes, and returning the remaining parts back to said owner. Don't worry, it's all there, often with extras!

The fact that what we return doesn't function the same is irrelevant. We've used what we need, and there's always other useful stuff elsewhere under your surface. Some might be getting tougher to find, but we can always dig deeper. This may require displacing some of our own to get to it, but the great growth machine of the economy will find a place for them. Eventually.

But I'm writing you to demand an apology. You are hurting us. You once provided a climate where we were happy, yet now we burn, drown, or suffer radiation burns. We can't survive these droughts and diseases, and clearly you must be to blame.

If you don't treat us right, we may not be around long to use you. The terms of the contract are being ignored. Don't make us move to Mars where, surely, we can survive just as well. We'd probably bring you to court if we considered you a living entity, so count yourself lucky.

*Darrin LR Fiddler
Kelowna, BC*

...*Broadway subway from pg. 16*

along the line. Development is really what this is all about.

But this excessive development is not needed to meet growth and will mostly serve the global capital that will further undermine affordability. The subway extension from Arbutus to UBC is predicated on using development fees to help fund it. This will require large amounts of density bonusing for luxury condos at UBC, Jericho Lands, station areas and other sites, on top of rental development that is exempt from development fees.

So rather than development fees being used to help pay for civic amenities like replacement of community centres, they will be used to pay for the provincial, federal and TransLink responsibilities of transit funding. This is an encroachment onto the municipal tax base. Already, TransLink is getting a regional property tax and development fee to pay for the subway's proposed first phase to Arbutus.

In October 2016, Green Vancouver Coun. Adriane Carr brought forward a motion, seconded by NPA Councillor Melissa De Genova, that opposed the use of development fees to fund transit. It was voted down by Vision. But now both incumbents and their parties, except for Councillor Colleen Hardwick, voted for the subway extension that included funding from development fees.

Vancouver city staff have confirmed that the number of projected new units is beyond that justified for projected population growth. And existing zoned capacity is already well beyond what is needed to meet projected growth to 2040. Yet the rush to rezone continues.

These policies go back to the failed EcoDensity policies of 2007. Former NPA mayor Sam Sullivan copyrighted the name and his then-director of planning, Brent Toderian, defined the program. After the 2008 election, when Sullivan and the NPA were wiped off council except for one seat, he said that he was a victim of density. But Vision, which promised to reconsider EcoDensity, just rebranded it, with Toderian, as the Greenest City.


Then Vision also approved the regional change from the Livable Region Strategic Plan to the Regional Growth Strategy. This included regional designation of Frequent Transit Development Areas that Broadway, like Cambie, is destined to become if a subway is implemented.

From 2007, the city was warned that making density and growth a primary objective would lead to massive displacement. Demolition of existing affordable rentals, character/heritage houses, secondary suites, and small businesses, would be replaced with much more expensive new construction. And

that has come to pass with an affordability crisis as predicted, that will be expanded with the Broadway subway corridor planning currently underway.

Sullivan now is a provincial MLA as the BC Liberal critic for municipal affairs. He is proposing to take away municipal land-use authority on areas around transit to further expedite this tower development agenda. The BC budget makes reference to expediting delivery of development project approvals, so the NDP may be looking at encroaching on municipal land-use authority too.

All this just goes to show that bad ideas are not necessarily politically left or right, and can continue through various regimes. Although Vision was wiped off council in the last election, without different directions to staff from the new council, we will continue to have more of the same.

But a Broadway subway is not a done deal. This too can be stopped like the freeways and urban renewal schemes of the 1960s that would have destroyed Chinatown, Gastown and communities on the east side like Strathcona and Grandview. 

Elizabeth Murphy is a private-sector project manager and was formerly a property development officer for the City of Vancouver and B.C. Housing. info@elizabethmurphy.ca

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